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Senator Kennedy
talks to
Hugh Fraser, page 12

Air raids on guerrilla bases precede arrival of Governor

Salisbury's jet aircraft have attacked guerrilla bases in Zambia and Mozambique, preparations for British rule were being made in expectation that the Governor-designate would arrive on Wednesday. The Patriotic Front guerrillas entering Zimbabwe Rhodesia. The raids came while final

Salisbury to rush through Bill restoring British rule

From Nicholas Ashford Salisbury, Dec 9

Zimbabwe Rhodesian jet aircraft attacked guerrilla bases in Zambia and Mozambique early today while in Salisbury preparations were made for the arrival of the Governor-designate, and for the rushing through of a parliamentary Bill providing for the return of the rebel territory to British rule.

According to a Combined Operations Department communiqué, the air strikes into Zambia were carried out because captured guerrillas had said that Mr Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (Zimpru) was trying to send its guerrillas as far as possible into the country in order to escalate the war.

The communiqué stated that the targets consisted of Zimpru staging posts in which large numbers of guerrillas had grouped in preparation for incursions into Zimbabwe Rhodesia. It said that all targets were "terrorist bases" and contained no refugees or Zambian forces.

A second communiqué issued later in the day said that the raids into Mozambique had been against bases used by Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (Zanla).

The fact that Zimbabwe Rhodesia should have carried out such attacks only days before the country is to come under direct British rule is an indication of the Salisbury Government's concern at the extent of Patriotic Front infiltration. Official sources put the number of active guerrillas now operating inside the country at about 17,000, although the Zimbabwe Rhodesian Ministry in London is saying the figure is even higher.

According to a British spokesman in Salisbury, Lord Soames and his retinue of political

advisers is expected to arrive at about 10.30 on Wednesday. However, the exact time of the arrival is still awaited.

It is not yet known who will be at the airport to greet Lord Soames. Initially British Diplomats who are in Salisbury as part of the planning team intended to restrict the Zimbabwe Rhodesian reception committee to the Chief Justice and one or two other officials.

But several political leaders have shown interest in being there as well.

The decision on this and other procedural matters will be taken personally by Lord Soames who is already being called "the Great Dictator" here because of the wide powers he will wield during his tenure of office.

Soon after his arrival at Salisbury airport, where he will be greeted by the British South African Police and playing Golf, Lord Soames will be driven to Government House, recently vacated by President Ian Smith.

There he will preside over a ceremony to raise the Union Jack, a symbolically important act which will be the first time the British flag has flown there since Sir Humphrey Gibbs, the last Governor, bowed out when Rhodesia became a republic in 1969.

The same evening, Lord Soames will make a television address to the nation in which he is expected to set the tone of his Administration. Zimbabwe Rhodesians of all colours have generally been impressed by the fact that a man of Lord Soames's calibre is taking the reins of the country and they hope he will use his wide powers with tact and firmness.

However, there is some concern that the political and military volatility of the situation may force Lord Soames to hand his authority to the country.

In anticipation that Lord Soames will arrive on Wednesday, the Patriotic Front would send its bombers. The carnage would be incredible.

A Foreign Office spokesman declined to make any specific comment on the raids but said the Lancaster House talks in London were discussing a ceasefire to put a stop to such incidents.

The spokesman would not say whether the Foreign Office considered that the new raids breached Britain's last appeal to Salisbury to exercise restraint. This appeal was made after Rhodesian raids into Zambia provoked anti-British demonstrations.

Forces' strength: The Rhodesian Government has already told Britain confidentially that the size of their forces (Our Diplomatic Correspondent writes). The Patriotic Front representatives are still refusing to do so until they know what is going to happen afterwards, a spokesman said.

day, the Zimbabwe Rhodesian Parliament plans to finish all four readings of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Rhodesia Amendment Bill on the previous day. The Bill states that the country shall cease to be an independent state and shall become part of Her Majesty's dominions and that all power will be vested in the British Governor.

The Bill will be tabled for first reading on Tuesday morning by Mr Chris Andersen, the Minister of Justice, and it is hoped that both the Assembly and the Senate will approve it by the same evening or Wednesday morning at the latest.

There is opposition to the Bill. The only voice of protest when the new constitution was debated a week ago came from Mr Mark Partridge, a signatory to the unilateral declaration of independence in 1965 but now a backbencher.

The Bill stipulates that Parliament shall be dissolved on the day that President Gurnede, the existing black head of state, transfers power to Lord Soames in what is likely to be a bizarre reversal of former handing-over ceremonies in Africa.

The Bill does not define the functions or period of office of the British Governor but says he shall have whatever legislative and executive powers are conferred on him by British Orders-in-Council arising from the 1979 Southern Rhodesia Act passed in Westminster. It says that elections should be held "as soon as is practicable" after the Governor arrives.

Under the terms of the Bill, existing ministers and deputy ministers will continue to hold nominal office and draw their salaries until the election. Similarly, President Gurnede will continue to enjoy his presidential salary and privileges although he will have no real power. He has recently moved from Government House in Salisbury to Government House in Bulawayo.

The terms of reference of the committee are "to consider the future of the country in the light of the national bargaining in the light of all relevant factors and to report to the management board."

Members of the review body have been selected from many firms, representing the various geographical areas and the interests of large and small companies.

The committee will approach its task "with great urgency." Two meetings will be held before Christmas and it is expected that a report and recommendations will be given to the federation's management board early next year.

Behind the review initiative lies a recent history of discontent among many firms at the way in which the new four-year agreement was reached with the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions after the one and two day strikes last year.

Some companies want to abandon the industry's two-tier bargaining system under which minimum rates and fringe benefits for two million engineering workers are negotiated at national levels but actual earnings are determined by plant bargaining.

The Wilson committee will almost certainly not go along with that view, but it is likely to propose some important changes in the industry's wage-fixing machinery.

The controversial autumn settlement between the Federation and CSEU provides for a 39-hour week by the end of 1981 and skilled workers in the industry will get a minimum of £73 a week when the agreement in their factory comes up for renewal. Union leaders have agreed to make no more claims on hours and holidays until 1983, and the employers say that this will give them a valuable breathing space.

Mr John Porter, industrial relations director of the Federation said: "Although there is no intention that this committee will in any way pre-empt the review, the details of the 1979 dispute, it would nevertheless be entirely complacent to claim that there were no lessons to be drawn from it."

The particular circumstances that led to the dispute, which neither side imagined would develop in the way it did, were probably unique and are unlikely to be repeated. However, the committee will still be looking to see what measures we can take to avoid a repetition."

Some companies want to

No panic by motorists over petrol shortage

By Craig Selton

The progressive closure of Shell filling stations caused no more than a few minor difficulties for drivers yesterday.

The motoring organizations believe that the weekend clearly demonstrated that the British motorist has been hardened by past experiences of petrol shortages and is refusing to panic.

Shell stations were closed over the weekend to conserve stocks. Few are expected to open today owing to the action by drivers and ancillary workers as 35 out of 45 of the company's depots.

The RAC and AA reported that many other filling stations were open. Apart from some local shortages in London and Essex, the few drivers who went out found petrol without difficulty.

Mr Robert Pearson, of the Motor Agents Association said: "I think people have finally realized that there is no point in panicking."

There is plenty of petrol to go round. Drivers without essential journeys are probably staying at home. The situation may deteriorate later this week."

The AA said some drivers had obviously not ventured out because of the possibility of shortages. Many others realized that "topping up" was futile and caused more shortages and queues.

There was still some evidence of profiteering. One driver was charging an extra 10p on four-star petrol. The spokesman said: "We do not like it that whenever there is a hint of a shortage certain garages put up their prices. It does not create demand and creates ill-will between motorists and filling stations." Similar views were expressed by the RAC.

Mr Walter Johnson, Labour MP for Derby South, urged motorists yesterday to boycott garages which overcharged after the Shell dispute ends.

Union asks to meet company Page 2



Mother Teresa, who is in Oslo to receive the Nobel peace prize today, leaving St Olav's Church yesterday to go back to St Joseph's Institute, where she is staying.

Supporters of rival ayatollahs clash in fierce gun battle

Tabriz, Dec 9.—The broadcasting station in the northwest city of Tabriz, unofficial capital of the Turkish-speaking population of Iran, was the scene of fierce fighting tonight as supporters of the country's second most powerful religious leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, tried to recapture it from followers of Ayatollah Khomeini, the Iranian revolutionary leader.

Witnesses said at least five people were killed and many others wounded in the shooting which engulfed the entire city. Machine gun and rifle tracers arced across the city as the two sides fought running battles in the streets in the heaviest outbreak of fighting in Iran since September when Government forces clashed with minority Kurdish dissidents.

Some firing was also heard from the university grounds not far from the broadcasting station and tracers were seen about a mile from the main area.

Earlier in the day supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini snatched the radio station in Tabriz, provincial capital of East Azerbaijan in a bloodless assault after the Azerbaijanis had held it for three days, broadcasting pro-Shariat-Madadi messages. They gave up without a struggle as a crowd of about 10,000 surged up the steep road leading to the hill-top station.

When several thousand Shariat-Madadi supporters returned a few hours later, shouting "Allah o Akbar" (God is great), Ayatollah Khomeini's followers opened up with bursts of sub-machine gun and rifle fire.

They broadcast calls for help during the siege, urging people loyal to the revolution to join the struggle for Islamic religious leaders to step in to stop the fighting. Soldiers arrived to help them, reliable sources said.

In an attempt to rally other Turkish-speaking Iranians to the Government cause, the state radio system in Tehran played Turkish songs supporting Ayatollah Khomeini.

Khomeini aides urged Ayatollah Shariat-Madadi to disband the main Turkish-speaking party, the Muslim People's Republican Party (MPRP), which had started the latest unrest. There was no immediate response from Ayatollah Shariat-Madadi. Ayatollah Khomeini went on television to

warn the people against "bloodshed and fratricide" and told minorities not to "create unrest and disturbances."

The troubles, which arose after calls for changes in an Islamic constitution and greater autonomy for minority groups in Iran, appear to have developed by tonight into a major domestic crisis for Ayatollah Khomeini.

The MPRP regards Ayatollah Shariat-Madadi as their spiritual leader, as do most of the 8,000,000 Turkish-speaking Azerbaijanis.

After several religious leaders known for their pro-Khomeini sympathies sent telegrams from the Holy City of Qom urging Ayatollah Shariat-Madadi to disavow the MPRP, the Government spokesman said in a telephone interview that his father had no intention of doing so. "He supports and endorses the MPRP," he added.

Acting for Ayatollah Khomeini, the ruling Revolutionary Council ordered a mission to Tabriz tomorrow to try to restore order in the city, which was quieter by midnight, and stop the fighting from spreading—Deuter, UPI, Agence France Presse.

New tactics: As the seizure of the American Embassy in Tehran enters its sixth week, the United States administration is resorting to new tactics to secure the release of the hostages (Our Washington Correspondent writes).

The moves include a possible international trade embargo against Iran, as well as diplomatic approaches to the Iranian authorities by a number of special envoys representing European and Middle East governments sympathetic to Washington.

Mr Sadeq Corbadeh the Iranian Foreign Minister announced today that he hoped to set up what he called an international grand jury within the next 10 days to investigate "American intervention and wrongdoings" in Iran over the past 25 years. Its purpose would be to bring home to the American public how greatly Iranians had suffered during the reign of the deposed Shah.

He indicated that the hostages accused of spying would not be put on trial until the grand jury had completed its work and that those who proved to be innocent would then be released.

French fear that assassins are ready to kill again

From Ian Murray Paris, Dec 9

A special command of fanatical killers was almost certainly responsible for the assassination in a Paris street on Friday of Captain Sinaï Chafik, a nephew of the Shah of Iran.

The careful planning of the shooting has led police to rule out any idea that this was a case of mistaken identity or an attack by a loner. They believe on the contrary that the commando is planning further attacks on members of the Shah's family.

A door-to-door inquiry was mounted in the quiet Villa Dupont, the smart residential

street where the murder took place. It revealed that for some days many local people had noticed that the home of Princess Ashraf, the Shah's twin sister who is presently in New York, had been under constant watch by young men of Middle Eastern appearance.

More cars than usual were also noticed turning round in the private road, which is a dead end.

Captain Chafik had been in France only since November 14 having arrived to stay at his mother's house with his own sister, Princess Azadeh. He had, however, made several other visits over the past year.

Continued on page 4, col 5

Outrageous, Patriotic Front says

The air strikes by Zimbabwe Rhodesia were immediately condemned by Patriotic Front delegates in London as "outrageous."

Mr Willie Muzarura, Mr Joshua Nkomo's chief spokesman, said: "The Rhodesians are not serious about a settlement. These raids show their mood. They are preparing for war."

Dr Eddison Zvobgo, chief spokesman for Mr Robert Mugabe's wing of the Patriotic Front, said: "This confirms our belief that the Mugabewes forces will be ready to massacre the people if we accept this plan for so-called Assembly places."

"They obviously believe they can wipe out our forces if we were foolish enough to accept this plan."

He said that if the Patriotic Front's forces moved into the assembly points proposed by the British, the Zimbabwe Rhodesians "on the slightest provocation" would start a ceasefire breach.

George VI accession speech withdrawn from auction

By Stewart Teahler

A copy of King George VI's accession speech, partly written in his own hand, was withdrawn yesterday from a Sotheby's auction after protests from the Privy Council Office.

The speech is part of a collection submitted as "the property of a gentleman" for sale at an auction on December 17. Sotheby's have been told by the Privy Council Office that the speech should not be in private hands but belongs in the office's archives, the Palace archives, or the Public Records Office.

Mr Peter Wilson, chairman of Sotheby's, said last night: "The company has no option in the interests of the vendor but to withdraw certain documents from the sale, including the accession speech of George VI, pending the problem being resolved as regards title."

Sotheby and Company, as auctioneers, are not in a position to evaluate the various claims laid to this property."

The speech addressed to the Privy Council as accession council, is partly printed but below the text King George has

added a paragraph announcing that his brother would in future be known as the Duke of Windsor. In one corner there is a note saying "the King's own hand."

The speech and a number of other royal papers were originally in the hands of Sir Edward Leese, who retired as clerk in the Privy Council in 1951. At the time of the abdication crisis he was deputy clerk.

When Sir Edward died in 1971 his estate passed to his wife, who died four years later. In her will she left some red dispatch boxes, which belonged to her husband, to Mr David Swannell, a Singer selling and auctioneer of her will.

Mr Swannell was not available yesterday to comment on the auction of the speech or the protests of the Privy Council Office.

These began last week when Mr Neville Leigh, clerk to the council, was told about the speech after publication of the auction catalogue. He spoke to Sotheby's and asked them to discuss the matter with the anonymous vendor.

Escaped prisoners hunted

Roadblocks were set up around Perth last night after two prisoners, described as "dangerous" by the Scottish Office, escaped from Perth Prison.

William Manson, aged 40, and John McDuff, aged 37, disappeared from one of the prison halls at tea-time.

Manson was serving a 12-year sentence imposed at Glasgow High Court last January and McDuff was serving two terms of 14 and seven years.

A third man is understood to have been involved but was recaptured before he got beyond the prison wall.

Tory-led fight against Bill

The three leading local government associations, all Tory-led, are holding talks to form a united front to fight the main financial provisions of the Local Government Planning and Land Bill. They see its proposed penalties for overspending and controls of capital as a serious attack on local democracy and a strain-jacker on local government.

Defoliant weedkiller inquiry demanded

An inquiry into the effects of 245T, the defoliant weedkiller, is to be demanded by Mr Roy Mason, shadow Minister of Agriculture. The call comes after wives of two Forestry Commission workers said they believed their miscarriages might be linked to the spraying of 245T.

Amnesty's murder file

Amnesty International issued a warning in its annual report, yesterday about the increasing use of murder, kidnapping and the death penalty by governments to eliminate political dissenters. It also reported there had been "little or no change in the systematic repression" documented in previous years.

England are leaders

Vivian Richards, with 153 not out, helped the West Indies to an easy victory over Australia in their one-day match in Melbourne. England lead the table with four points from two games.

Steel union rejects pay talks 'charade'

Mr William Sims, general secretary of the British Steel Trades Union, said yesterday that his union was "not prepared to go through the charade of another meeting with the corporation unless they are prepared to increase the 2 per cent offer."

Kampuchean unite

Communist and anti-communist Kampuchean are uniting to fight invading Vietnamese troops, according to Colonel Prachak Sawangchit, commander of Thailand's front-line troops along the border. He said the Vietnamese were having difficulty with their supply and support services.

Fastnet report: Greater use of radios and changes in yacht design are recommended in the report on the Fastnet race disaster.

Cuts condemned: The National Union of Students' annual conference condemned the Government's public spending cuts despite strong speeches by Conservative students.

Turner gallery hope: Prospects of a Turner gallery have come nearer with an anonymous offer of £3m to the Tate Gallery.

Docklands scheme: The proposed development corporation for the Liverpool and Birkenhead docklands has provoked both anger and optimism in the area.

Johannesburg: Anglican church head takes defiant stand on apartheid.

Home News: 2, 3; Books: 15-20; Coast: 14; Crossword: 22; Diary: 12; Engagements: 14; Features: 5, 10.

Unanimity unlikely on Nato nuclear arms

Nato is expected to decide on Wednesday to implement its controversial plan to deploy new long-range nuclear weapons in Europe. But the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway and Denmark all have reservations about the plan.

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Letters: An error of judgment not negligence, from the President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and others; and on arms control, from Mrs Elizabeth Young.

Leading articles: Standing of the Government; Peking wall; Arts, page 9.

Brian Alderson introduces an exhibition and a new book on the illustrated Edward Ardizzone; John Percival visits Scottish Ballet's Cinderella; William Mann welcomes the Welsh National Opera to London.

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Mr Jack Solomon, Sonia Delaunay. Features, pages 5, 12.

Hugh Fraser in conversation with Senator Edward Kennedy. Why the West should think again about President Sadat.

Sport, pages 6-8

Cricket: India fall 25 runs short of target; Badminton: Holders retain titles in English Championships; Rowing: Boat race trials.

Business News, pages 15-20

Financial Editor: A little local difficulty: St Eran: no longer a grey area; equities head sideways.

Buying Dewar's is like investing in a yearling and discovering it's an Arkle

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HOME NEWS

Tory-controlled groups hope to defeat finance curbs they see as threat to local democracy

By Christopher Warman
Local Government Correspondent

Local authorities are set to oppose the main financial provisions in the Local Government Finance Bill, published last week, intending to defeat what they see as a serious attack on local democracy.

The three leading local authority associations, all Conservative-controlled, have begun discussions to achieve a united front. Mr John Grange, chairman of the Association of County Councils, said the Bill put a "serious attack on local democracy".

The three leading local authority associations, all Conservative-controlled, have begun discussions to achieve a united front. Mr John Grange, chairman of the Association of County Councils, said the Bill put a "serious attack on local democracy".

A fellow Conservative, Sir Kenneth Thompson, chairman of Merseyside County Council, said: "I should be surprised if its passage through either House was free from difficulty."

The Bill contains proposals for a new block grant by which the Government will provide support for local services. That would enable the Government to set spending levels for individual councils and would remove any authority that overspends substantially by reducing its grant.

That will not become effective until 1981-82, but the Government plans transitional arrangements to achieve a similar effect in 1980-81.

The other main contentious proposal is to control capital spending. Now councils must get government permission for large projects, but they can raise money for them either from the rates or from borrowing.

The new controls will enable the Government to fix a strict ceiling within which councils may spend without reference to the Government.

The Bill has been delayed by the Government's decision after Labour Party opposition

to switch its introduction from the House of Lords to the Commons.

Some local authority leaders are privately disappointed, because they felt the Lords could have given a rough ride to Lord Selwyl, of Leeds, Under-Secretary of State at the Department of the Environment, in his first attempt to pilot through an important piece of legislation.

It is return to the Commons has brought a different possible benefit. The delay could mean that when the Bill reaches the committee stage, many county councils will have set their rate precepts and Conservative council leaders may be able to convince the Government that there will be no explosion in rates.

If so they may persuade the Government to drop plans for the transitional arrangements, which Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, has admitted will meet out "rough justice".

Certainly he and Mr Tom King, Minister for Local Government and Environmental Affairs, have been told by local government that their proposals will give councils greater freedom. Mr King said the Bill was "not intended to be a punitive measure".

The proposals together will entail a detailed intervention by central government in local financial affairs and are seen as a serious threat to local democracy.

Mr A. G. Taylor, chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, said: "The Government is likely to become as complex as the present grant system and be unjust and inefficient."

"We doubt Whitehall's ability to produce fair and effective measures of need for each council," he said.

Mr Taylor said the Government was likely to become as complex as the present grant system and be unjust and inefficient.

client measures, of need for each council, and we maintain that reasonable values cannot in any way be claimed to be a fair measure for comparing the wealth of authorities."

The councils most likely to be caught in the overspending trap are the Labour-controlled authorities in city areas.

Labour groups, both in central and local government, are expected to oppose the Bill, met at Coventry at the weekend to discuss their tactics in the light of the rate support grant settlement and the Government's demands for spending cuts.

However, there is no support for any unlawful "Clash Cross" type of opposition to Government policies.

Mr Roy Hattersley, Opposition spokesman on the environment, said that the Shadow Cabinet had requested a meeting with the prime minister's executive committee to ensure that the local Labour parties understood that any unlawful action had been ruled out at the last party conference.

The councillors agreed to fight the Bill, also to make account of the consequences of refusing to make them.

The blunt view of Mr Ted Knight, leader of Lambeth Council, was that his council is pledged to provide services and that the cost of refusing to make cuts must be on the rates. That view received little support.

Councils such as Hackney raised comparatively little for each penny rate and to put all the ratepayers would mean rate rises of 60 to 70 per cent for the same people who would be affected by cuts.

Mr Hattersley believes that the Labour Party should support whatever course a council takes within the law. That would depend on local needs and it was vital to uphold local autonomy to allow a council to make the decision it believed were right for its area.

Drivers ask Shell for meeting to end dispute

By David Felton
Labour Reporter

Union officials representing 1,500 Shell tanker drivers have been either suspended or on strike for nearly two weeks have asked the management for another meeting to try to solve the apparently intractable dispute.

Two late night sessions last week and the intervention of the Government's Conciliation and Arbitration Service all failed.

But Mr Jack Ashwell, Transport and General Workers' Union national secretary for commercial transport, said yesterday that he still hoped to reach a settlement with the management over the use of outside contract labour.

Petrol and oil supplies are further threatened by the overtime ban by Esso tanker drivers over a pay claim. Esso and Shell together supply more than 40 per cent of the United Kingdom market.

Mr Ashwell said he was convinced settlements could be reached with the oil companies on the pay issue in the next two weeks.

During negotiations over the weekend, he said Texaco increased their offer from 20 to 23 per cent, and talks with BP management are due to be held on Tuesday.

Shell drivers have rejected an offer of more than 20 per cent and have asked the TGWU for official backing for industrial action.

However, the dispute at Shell over the increased use of contract labour, which the union claims threatens its members' jobs, is more complex. Shop stewards decided last week to ask drivers to go on strike still working to come out on strike. Meetings are to be held at the depot this morning.

Shell has insisted that its rationalization plan, which involves the closure of five depots and the reorganization of three more, is a commercial decision and it cannot countenance the union's non-cooperation with it.

Under the plan there will be increased overtime for contract drivers to distribute fuel from the depots which have been, or are about to be, reorganized.

The union says there should be a procedure for both sides to go to arbitration if no agreement can be reached. Shell has so far refused to accept that suggestion.



David Cobb, a former naval commander, painting a naval history of the Second World War for the Royal Naval Museum Portsmouth.

Tory group fails to sway NUS over cuts

From Diana Geddes
Education Correspondent
Blackpool

A motion condemning government cuts in public expenditure was passed yesterday by a large majority at the annual conference of the National Union of Students in Blackpool, but only after a vigorous defence of government policies by Conservative students.

The motion declared that the Government's promises of individual freedom were meaningless, and that the cuts would have less opportunity to use it because of the cuts. It was not just a question of cutting costs, the cuts would be going deep into the essentials.

Mr Christopher Bates, a member of the Federation of Conservative Students (FCS), from Aberdeen University, called on students to develop a sense of responsibility about Britain's economy.

Miss Anna Soreby, the only FCS member on the union's national executive council, claimed that the conference was not truly representative of the student body. She said that the Conservative manifesto had delivered in public expenditure cuts, because that was the only way forward for the country, she said.

The FCS have done much to improve their organization over the last year. They have nearly 100 of the 700 student delegates at the conference; membership figures were up to 15 per cent last year, and with some 20,000 members, they are the largest political group among students, the left being splintered into factions.

Young students joined in the applause but remained firmly in their seats while a large majority gave two standing ovations to Mr Derek Robinson, the British Leyland shop steward who was dismissed after publishing a pamphlet attacking Sir Michael Edwards's plan for the future of the company.

Mr Robinson, guest speaker at the conference, claimed that Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, had authorized his dismissal from Leyland. The real reason for his dismissal was the Government's fear of a concerted trade union attack on its new Employment Bill, he suggested.

The conference passed motions opposing the Government's policy on overseas students and attacking the changes to the abortion law proposed in Mr John Gummer's Abortion Amendment Bill. The students' claim for a 36 per cent increase in maintenance grants was rejected.

Teachers' campaign: The National Union of Teachers decided on Saturday to mount a sustained campaign in the new year against government cuts in education and public expenditure, including strike action as a last resort.

Shadow of Haughey policy over resumed Ulster talks

From Christopher Thomas
Dublin

Mr Charles Haughey, the Irish Republic's new Prime Minister who will be formally installed tomorrow, is expected to explain soon what he means by the promised "change of emphasis" in Northern Ireland policy.

Uncertainty about the republic's approach to Ulster under its new leader will overshadow the delicate negotiations which are to be resumed in Belfast today to try to launch a constitutional conference on handing back powers from Westminster to an elected assembly in the province.

Mr Humphrey Atkins, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, will again be attempting to persuade Roman Catholic political leaders to join the conference.

For the second time in less than a week he is to meet Mr John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, at Stormont Castle this afternoon in the knowledge that the SDLP says the conference is doomed.

The SDLP's rank and file is determined to get an assurance on the possibility of links with Dublin being included in any devolution exercise, Mr Hume reported on the first round of

talks with Mr Atkins to his party executive and influential constituency representatives on Saturday, and they apparently were not impressed by what the minister had offered.

Today's resumed meeting is the last chance for government hopes of opening the conference with a "token" meeting before Christmas, with a substantive conference in the new year, because tomorrow Mr Hume is leaving for the European Parliament in Strasbourg where he will stay until the weekend.

Feeling about Mr Haughey's approach to Northern Ireland has been heightened by his virtual silence on the subject for the past nine years. But seasoned political observers believe that while he may pursue the Ulster issue more vigorously than his predecessor, he is unlikely to raise the temperature with rousing speeches on Irish unity.

Powell criticism: As proof against the guilt of false friends and the resilience of open enemies, the Official Unionists would continue to stand rock-firm for "the union, the whole union and nothing but what is consistent with the union" Mr Enoch Powell, MP for South Down, told a meeting at Omagh on Saturday

Government accused over disabled

By Pat Healy

The Government is accused today of dragging its feet over a manifesto commitment to help disabled people.

Professor Peter Townsend, chairman of the Disability Alliance, points out that there is no sign of government action on its manifesto promise "to provide a coherent system of disability services to help disabled people to meet the costs of disability, so that more disabled people can support themselves and live normal lives."

Instead Mr Reg Prentice, Minister of State for Social Security, must expect to take their share of public expenditure cuts. Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, had told the Conservative Party annual conference that Britain spent less on disabled people than other countries.

"But by November, 1979, no proposals had been put forward to suggest that priority was being given to disabled people. His point is made in the new edition of the Disability Rights Handbook, published today by the Disability Alliance. Disability Rights Handbook for 1980 (Disability Alliance, 1 Cambridge Terrace, London, NW1 4JL: 80p plus 30p postage).

M4 blocked by floods after torrential rain

Torrential rain flooded roads in South Wales last night. Police appealed to motorists to stay off the roads as the 12-mile stretch of the M4 between Newport and the Severn Bridge was closed for 45 minutes when it became awash with up to 18 in of floodwater.

The water was serious flooding on parts of the A48 and A40 in Gwent. The Aberbryddwy and Tintern areas were badly affected and the A470 Cardiff to Merthyr Tydfil road was submerged. Drivers were warned to avoid the area.

Floods also closed minor roads in Devon and Cornwall. In Sussex, where there were gales as well as floods, some roads were blocked by trees. The four carriageway of the A23 were flooded.

Farmer's wife leads fight against Lake District water extraction

From John Chartres
Manchester

Nearly 300 campaigners against a proposal to extract an extra seven million gallons of water a day from Wast Water, in the Lake District, are expected to converge on Parliament tomorrow.

The campaign against the proposal, which has been put forward by British Nuclear Fuels to meet the growing needs of the Windscale nuclear reprocessing plant, has gained considerable momentum in the past three months.

Mrs Kathie Naylor, the wife of a farmer, has been put forward by British Nuclear Fuels to meet the growing needs of the Windscale nuclear reprocessing plant, has gained considerable momentum in the past three months.

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The lake is believed to be at least 200ft deep (although no one has officially plumbed it), in a gravelly stream on its southern bank which contribute to its dramatic appearance. Water from the lake is already being used at Windscale at the rate of four million gallons a day.

The need for more water arises from an expansion of British Nuclear Fuels' purely commercial interests, and not for the provision of an additional source of energy for the national grid.

The opponents of the Wast Water scheme also fear that the proposals could be the end of a much longer wedge. "Once they have turned it into an artificial reservoir it would be hard impossible to prevent them from putting in higher and higher dams," Mrs Naylor said.

"They could very easily build a dam of up to 300ft which would not only alter the contours and drainage of the landscape but would be entirely impractical and would be a disaster."

Both Wast Water and Ennerdale Water are cherished by the more discriminating Lake District visitors, who prefer to leave their cars and walk for long distances, and the atmosphere is shared by the cafes, bars and souvenir shops around the middle of Windermere.

Many devotees to the Lake District claim that Ennerdale Water and Wast Water are probably the last of the lakes still unpolluted, either by artificial reservoirs or extensive water extraction.

Thatcher plaque site refusal

South Kesteven District Council is refusing permission to erect a plaque to mark the birthplace of Mrs Margaret Thatcher because of the building's condition.

It will agree to the plaque only if the outside of the former greengrocer's shop in North Parade, Grantham, is cleaned up.

Changes urged in Fastnet yachts and radios

By Alan Hamilton

Changes in ocean racing yacht design and greater use of radio transmitters to pinpoint position are recommended in the report on the 1979 Fastnet Race, in which 15 lives were lost and 24 boats abandoned in a violent storm.

An inquiry into the worst disaster in yachting history has found what it calls a disturbing correlation between certain designs and lack of stability.

It urges further study on hull design, particularly on boats with wide, shallow hulls, and recommends new requirements for totally secure hatches to seal off gangways below deck, and bilge pumps to mischance water pouring into the sea instead of through drainage holes in the cockpit.

During the search and rescue operation after the storm, radio communications were less effective than they might have been, causing the rescuers difficulty and delay in finding those vessels in trouble.

Only 65 per cent of the 303 competing yachts had radio transmitters, the report states, and it suggests a radio report-

ing procedure for long-distance races to enable the organizers to keep track of competitors.

The report, compiled by Sir Hugh Forbes, chairman of the Royal Yachting Association, Sir Maurice Laing, admiral of the Royal Ocean Racing Club, and James Myatt, of the Yacht Masters' Qualification Panel, says that although the sea conditions encountered were beyond the experience of most competitors, the general standards of seamanship, navigation, and certainly of courage, were commendably high.

Commenting on criticism that yachts were abandoned too hastily, the report says that decision-making was not easy, especially when a boat appeared to be sinking. Most of the abandoned yachts were knocked down past horizontal, and suffered severe hull damage.

In spite of claims that some competitors had been insufficiently experienced to cope with the devastating weather, the report finds no reason to impose any extra requirements for the Fastnet, and says:

the race can be run again over the same course provided the harsh lessons of this year's tragedy are learnt.

But it does suggest that the Royal Ocean Racing Club should consider a minimum experience qualification for longer races.

Before the disaster only one life had been lost in the history of the Fastnet race. But this year, of 303 competitors who started from Cowes on August 11, only 85 finished. 194 retired, 15 crew were lost, and 24 boats were abandoned, including five lost believed sunk.

The storm reached its height in the early hours of August 14, with wind at force 11 and waves up to 14 feet high.

Organizers should cancel a race, the report says, only if weather forecasts immediately beforehand present an exceptional risk, and that the Fastnet, the race was well under way, when the first storm warnings were given.

The investigators note tersely that the length of warning given of some of the more dangerous weather was certainly not sufficient to allow most boats to run for shelter.

Steps to correct faults in sailing craft are recommended by the inquiry, as well as an alternative method of starting the engine when the battery is flat; yachts with engine power would have better control in the storm.

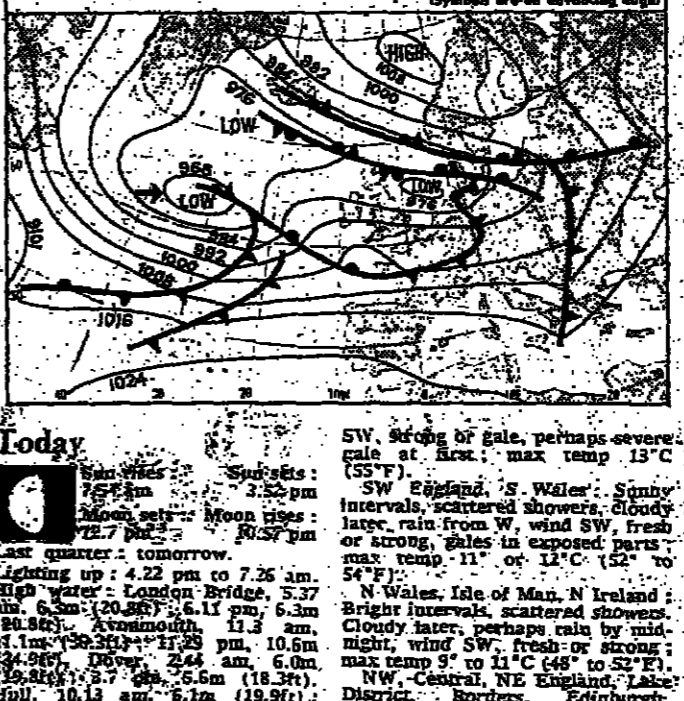
The rescue services are praised for acting with "extraordinary and commendable promptitude", but the report concludes that the weather was not entirely unprecedented, and that yachts must experience such conditions from time to time.

John Chartres writes: Those involved in the rescue operation are generally pleased at the results given. It is a tribute to their efforts, although the Royal National Lifeboat Institution still feels that its crew's efforts, involving 15 hours from both sides of the Irish Sea, spending a total of 170 hours afloat in appalling conditions, was underestimated by the media at large, in comparison to the publicity given to the Royal Navy and RAF helicopters.

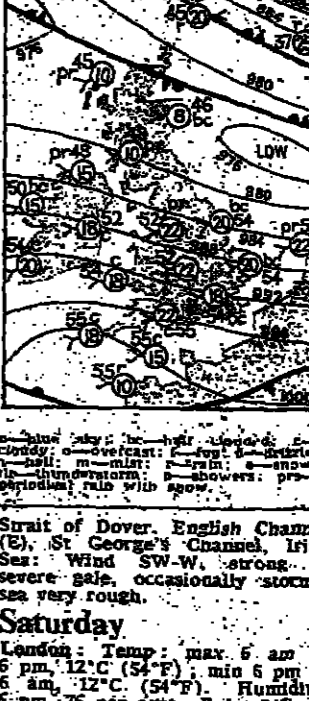
'Blow for sanity' plea by Mr Callaghan

Disillusionment and dissatisfaction with Conservative rule is increasing, Mr James Callaghan, Leader of the Opposition, says in a message today to the Labour Party conference in the Hertfordshire, South-west, by-election.

Weather forecast and recordings



Weather forecast and recordings



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Secretary-General

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Anger at lack of work in the Lords

By George Clark
Political Correspondent

While the peers still wait patiently for an important piece of Government legislation to be presented in the House of Lords, they have heard that there was a bitter argument in the Cabinet last week when it was decided that, in deference to an Opposition demand, the Local Government Finance Bill should start its parliamentary progress in the Commons.

The Bill had already had a second reading in the Lords when Mr Callaghan, Leader of the Opposition, threatened that Labour MPs would disrupt all other Government business unless the Bill came to the Commons first.

In Cabinet, it appears, Lord Somers, Leader of the House

WEATHER REPORTS YESTERDAY MIDDAY

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Rain
London	12-14	W 10-15	Partly	No
Edinburgh	10-12	W 10-15	Partly	No
Belfast	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	No
Cardiff	12-14	W 10-15	Partly	No
Manchester	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	No
Newcastle	10-12	W 10-15	Partly	No
Nottingham	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	No
Oxford	12-14	W 10-15	Partly	No
Sheffield	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	No
Southampton	12-14	W 10-15	Partly	No
Stirling	10-12	W 10-15	Partly	No
Wolverhampton	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	No
York	12-14	W 10-15	Partly	No

Overseas selling prices

Commodity	Price
Wheat	12.50
Barley	11.00
Oats	10.00
Rye	11.50
Maize	12.00
Soyabean	13.00
Canola	14.00
Sunflower	15.00
Linseed	16.00
Flax	17.00
Cotton	18.00
Wool	19.00
Gold	20.00
Silver	21.00
Diamonds	22.00
Jewellery	23.00
Art	24.00
Antiques	25.00
Books	26.00
Records	27.00
CDs	28.00
Video	29.00
Games	30.00
Toys	31.00
Food	32.00
Alcohol	33.00
Tobacco	34.00
Clothing	35.00
Shoes	36.00
Furniture	37.00
Electronics	38.00
Household	39.00
Garden	40.00
Travel	41.00
Insurance	42.00
Legal	43.00
Medical	44.00
Education	45.00
Health	46.00
Beauty	47.00
Personal	48.00
Religious	49.00
Political	50.00

MP

"Government cannot solve our problems or set our goals or define our vision. Government cannot eliminate poverty or create jobs, it can only help. Government cannot reduce inflation; cannot save our cities or cure illiteracy, or provide energy."

This style of government for the USA judged by results is a failure. It is a failure that too like the spirit of betting "I dare not" wait "upon it would". Senator Kennedy is the epitome of the "Can Do" style of government. A popular lie. He stands for the effeminate, the cowardly, the pretentious like R. D. Truancy Lyndon Johnson and his own brother.

After nearly a decade of flagging American fortunes, the people, and certainly the Democratic Party, could decide to end the time out on old and hollowed ground. No, aversively, Americans should in their coming travels seek a priest king and possible victim, which could they choose—the heroic Greek Hercules or an ancient classical Dionysus, virtuous and sins larger than mine, the last brother of an extraordinary, powerful and suffering line.

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(he himself leads a left-wing party in which ex-Nasserists and ex-communists are working together), and are now reaping the whirlwind in the shape of an opposition far more fanatical and implacable than the secular movements which it has replaced.

anyone should have the chance of being a star.

The first pick was for the top team in each division to play a side composed of the best of the rest. When it came to vote on that the only man worth anything happened to be the manager of one of the top teams. (Though my son is on his team I disloyally abstained from voting on the ground that as a foreigner I have no right to do so.) He gave his opinion on a matter which bears so directly on the American way of life.)

In the end we decided on a formula of unambiguous complexity which ensures that almost all players will get a chance to play if only they are fit.

Moreover, everyone who plays in the league will get a trophy at the end of the season, with a special award for the winning team.

There is, I know, a contradiction between this generous concept that there must be no losers, and the aggressive desire to win displayed in those arguments with the referee. I forgive me what I was saying, but an Englishman is happy when he has explained America, but must let you down here and reveal that I can offer no explanation for this.

I can, however, finish this tale of the shorts. One blusterer, Sanderson, who after having bought them, I asked to go to the field in them only to find that all my colleagues had switched to track-suits to keep out the cold.

Enough is enough. I am certainly not planning to go through this business again, but for a track-suit, I'll take the old grey flannels. I'll avoid it.

Michael Leamon

هكذا من الأصل



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FIRST ENCOUNTER

The Government will this week at the South-West, Hampshire by-election face its first electoral test since the general election. It will do so in a better shape than a week or so ago, though it would be rash to assume that this improvement in the impression created by the Government will be reflected at the polls.

The Rhodesia settlement is a diplomatic achievement of the first order, promising an agreement that had eluded British statesmen of both main parties for so long. The Dublin summit was, by contrast, a diplomatic fiasco, but one where the Prime Minister was seen to be representing a popular British interest with considerable vigour, so it should not have diminished her public standing.

On both these issues there may be greater difficulties ahead than are now generally foreseen.

Much has to be done before the agreements of the negotiating table can be translated into a degree of orderly government in Rhodesia that would permit Britain finally to divest itself of responsibility without international opprobrium. On the EEC Mrs Thatcher may find that it is much harder to maintain her popular stance if substantial concessions are not made over Britain's budget contribution by her European partners in the diplomatic negotiations that are now getting under way. In that case she may have to choose between accepting a more modest improvement than the general public have come to expect of applying sanctions of a severity that would disturb a number of her colleagues. But for the moment both Rhodesia and, to a lesser extent, Dublin must both be marked down as a plus for the public reputation of the Government.

Then there has been the miners' vote to accept their pay

offer. At one level there is no cause for rejoicing over a settlement as high as 20 per cent. That will do nothing to bring down the rate of increases in the current pay round, though it is at least an indication to other unions that not even the miners regard the sky as the limit. But there was never much chance that the Government's strategy for controlling incomes would be successful in the first round. This strategy depends upon restricting the amount of money available so that the unions know that if they insist upon inflationary wage settlements they will simply be pricing some of their members out of jobs.

It was always a forlorn hope that the unions could be persuaded to accept this logic as soon as Mrs Thatcher had walked into Downing Street. Such a conversion could be expected to come about only as the unions began to recognize the grim consequences of one largely unrestrained pay round. The miners' settlement does not prove that this is happening. But the fact that the miners voted for acceptance against the recommendation of their executive, combined with the earlier vote for the reconstruction plan at British Leyland, does suggest that even in publicly owned industries union members are coming to be aware of the discipline of market forces.

The developments in the steel industry do not, it is true, point in the same direction. But it is too early to assume either that the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation will go ahead with their threatened strike, or that if they do it will be successful. A rise of a few percentage points above the present two per cent offer would be damaging for the industry, which is in such a parlous condition, but that would

still be well below the general level of settlements. What matters is whether forces are now at work that will lead to a decline in inflation in, say, a year's time.

That is also the best way to judge the severe increase in interest and mortgage rates. In themselves they are just about the surest way for any government to incur unpopularity. If they were to be a lasting feature of life under Mrs Thatcher this administration would be doomed. But the purpose of such drastic measures is to squeeze inflation out of the economy. It is, no use supposing that this could be done painlessly, and if it can be achieved in large measure within a reasonable period of time then the economic relief will be such as to give an excellent opportunity for a lasting improvement in Britain's performance.

Such hopes depend considerably upon how effectively public expenditure can be cut. At the moment the Government has managed to attract a good deal of public odium for economies that will not reduce the total level of public spending in the next financial year below its present rate. The modest savings in Civil Service manpower announced at the end of last week have strengthened dissatisfaction over the Government's performance in this field. So there is now the prospect not only of failing to continue the process of cutting income tax, which was begun so spectacularly in the Government's first Budget, but even possibly of taxes having to go up. The Government's ability to build on the good impression that has now been created in a number of fields will be influenced very largely by whether it is able to get back on course in this most critical of areas.

PEKING'S BLANK WALL

The closure of Peking's democracy wall will disappoint those who saw in the posters it bore the first shoots of freedom in China; a clear-headed demand for democracy as the west understands it, not the communist fiction that disguises it as democratic centralism. Following the fifteen-year sentence on Mr Wei Jingshan in October, the tight rules that now govern this expression of public opinion will silence all but those ready to risk a charge of counter-revolution and almost inevitable prison sentence.

For some reasons the setback may only be temporary. When Mr Wei was arrested last March it was soon apparent that Mr Deng Xiaoping's triumph three months earlier had drawn a fierce counter-attack from those still able to damage him. His measures of political relaxation, of economic enterprise freed from political dogma, together with the agreement that at last brought an American embassy to Peking had all had their opponents. Yet when the votes were counted in the central committee, Mr Deng won the day. Unfortunately the danger of disorder quickly became obvious. Rioting in Shanghai, protest sit-ins in the heart of Peking, unrest

among the new intake in many universities all imposed caution. If his opponents were to be fended off he must cede where he was weakest. The economy mattered more than cries for political liberty.

Paradoxically, repression in one quarter is matched by a demand for democracy in another. The party stalwarts, seeking to sabotage the free-market, the Maoist "dictatorial" behaviour are all agreed—no less Mr Deng himself—that never again must the party be run in Mao's way: adding his own followers at will to the politburo, packing central committee plenums, postponing due congresses until he could engineer the support he needed. Only democratic and constitutional procedures will restore good faith and give merit its due. At the centre of power democracy is henceforth to rule. This may not mean much. Counting heads in the party will not seem the same as the questioning of such dogmas as proletarian dictatorship. Seeking truth from the facts should nevertheless lead to seeking reality behind the words—and in the long run must do. Mr Deng argues that the economy must be the supreme objective after two decades of

damaging political struggle and social upheaval. In that case a degree of flexibility and independence will have to be accorded to the technical and managerial class. A bureaucracy bound by dogma cannot possibly promote the efficiency and productivity that China hopes to attain, certainly not by the end of this century. Since open-mindedness is now an officially approved outlook in China where economic advance is in question, it can hardly flourish without greater political freedom. In the end there must be respect for public opinion of the kind that has now been banished from the wall in Peking.

Yet the process may be slow. China is a country that has never encouraged, but done much to repress, the cultivation of individual opinions; it has regarded opposition to constituted authority as immoral; it looks to harmony within the group as the first duty in shaping social order. It is not thirty years of communism but rather more than a thousand years of Confucianism that inhibits democracy in China. It is one thing to be convinced by democratic arguments; quite another to discard instincts, upbringing and a very long tradition of political behaviour.

David Wood

Too young to test the EEC's real politik

Ron Hayward, general secretary of the Labour Party, a lifelong politician of the arts and crafts politics, delivered a warning to the European Parliament that the European Council would not elect a committee, a commission or an assembly of any kind, but without its using the powers it been given or its taking powers; he made clear that he feared the European Parliament would be to be this week in Strasbourg, as there is a sudden change of heart, all the main groups in Parliament will combine to elect the Community budget sent like tablets from the Sinai of council of Ministers.

Socialist group, the Christian group, and the Liberal group, and the Conservative group are all in line today. They have in hands, they say, the ultimate that allows them to reject mission budget as redrafted by the Council; and decision has at last given the authority to use it. Disparate and wasteful spending common agricultural policy is curbed, and more money diverted to energy, research, and transport, social policy, social development fund, and so on.

Seems fine enough. Super-severs and students of stark eloquence through armies may be tempted to here we see a Parliament than six months old the old, old path of no without redress of grievance without representation for the European throw out the Council of budget and build the

barricades, and the electors will cheat them every yard of the way. Yet the facts do not fit neatly into such simple scheme. First, the Council of Ministers, who have refused to accept the European Parliament's redraft of the Commission's budget draft, are no less democratically elected; and as Ministers they carry responsibility for the domestic policies of the countries of the Nine. That is why the United Kingdom voted with the majority in the Council. Among other things, the switch of Community spending from agriculture to other policies would have meant increased public spending by the United Kingdom, because in general you do not get Community financial help without strings.

Immediately then, the question arises, who knows best about the needs of a country of the Nine—the domestic parliament, or the European Parliament? No wonder Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, when he met the United Kingdom's Conservative MPs last week, murmured that rejection of the budget would be a rather dramatic step for such a young parliament to take; and no wonder Conservative old hands in Strasbourg are dropping hints that the European Democratic group must not appear to be taking the lead this week.

Secondly, some of the policies less experienced or more militant European MPs from the United Kingdom, Socialist as well as Conservative, fondly believe that by throwing out the Council budget for 1980 they will be supporting what is now virtually bipartisan policy at Westminster. Mrs Thatcher's demand for the refund of about £1,000m to bring receipts into line with outgoings.

Not so. Mrs Thatcher has agreed to a respite in her demand until February or March, when the next summit meeting will be called by the Italian Prime Minister, and her Government does not want the diplomatic preparation to be bedevilled by inexperienced free-lance politicians in Strasbourg, who lower their heads and rush straight at the Common Agricultural Policy. The United Kingdom wants public pressure to be maintained, yes. It does not want an ill-thought European budget and spending on CAP.

Thirdly, there is a question for all those Westminster MPs, on both sides of the House, who do not want to see the European Parliament grow in power as well as influence, until it becomes a rival to the Westminster Parliament. British members of the Socialist group in Strasbourg, led by Mrs Castle, will be voting to reject the Council's budget. I leave them to it. They are in Strasbourg, or at least some of them are, because they want to get rid of it. Why do they want to endow it with an ultimate weapon?

Fourthly, we must be allowed to doubt whether the European Parliament's rejection of the budget this week will mean what it appears to mean. For the past two years Strasbourg has rejected the Council's budget at its December meeting; and before the new year, or soon after, a few crumbs have dropped from the Council of Ministers' table and the budget has quietly gone through. Over enthusiastic new Euro-MPs must not be permitted to go on saying, "This is a compromise," except in the sense that for the first time the Parliament fights to switch expenditure from CAP to other things.

Nor, without being cynical, must we forget where the Parliament's self interest lies. The 1980 budget they talk of rejecting once and for all includes the allotment for the expenditure of the enlarged Parliament and the bigger groups within it. If the budget is thrown out this week and the reconciliation procedures do not bring about a compromise within a week or two, then the so-called twelfth rule begins to operate. The Parliament, like the whole Community, will be back to the 1979 budget, living from hand to mouth, month to month with no money to pay members of staff who already have been engaged.

Arms control for security

From Mrs Elizabeth Young

Sir, Gregory Trevor's article, "Arms control: the new missile test facing Nato" (December 7) suggests that it is against a repeat of the neutron bomb debacle that Nato must prepare itself. This is a view at once too narrow and too short. Yes, Nato's collapse in the face of the Soviet and neutron bomb propaganda is once again a dangerous. But to suppose that the Soviet Union is now merely attempting a repeat of the earlier farce would be tragic, as well as dangerous.

The Soviet Union can quite plausibly, and apparently does, interpret the Pershing II/Cruise missile proposals as an attempt by the United States to bypass the Salt II limits on intercontinental strategic weapons; after all they themselves, in a similar blight, more, gave some of their own medium-range missiles a strategic capability when they put them within range of major American targets in 1962, which led to the Cuban crisis.

They did this because they interpreted Mr McNamara's "second strike counterforce" doctrine and President Kennedy's arms build-up as intimating an American willingness to use nuclear capability (We all pay our military to be pessimistic). Medium-range missiles into Cuba was the immediate response, the apparently menacing Soviet military build-up in the long-term response, a threat they judged intolerable. That build-up is now intolerable to us.

But if our response to their intolerable Blitzkrieg capability is to take only the form of a slightly better defence, the result will be arms race for ever more. Our security now lies more clearly than ever in effective arms control. In 1977 President Carter made a proposal for deep cuts in weapons "even to 50 per cent" but dropped it at the first whiff of opposition. Is not now the time for him to repeat it?

Yours etc,
ELIZABETH YOUNG,
100 Bayswater Road, W2,
December 8.

Legal handicap
From Mr W. P. Oliver and Mr J. C. Smith, QC, FBA
Sir, We wish to draw attention to the difficulties being encountered by graduates seeking to enter either branch of the legal profession. All candidates are now required to attend courses of vocational training which are substantially longer and more expensive than courses for the former final examinations which have been replaced.

Local authorities have a discretion whether to award a grant to a graduate wishing to attend a course so as to qualify as a solicitor or a barrister. The practice of local authorities varies, but a few have decided to make no awards for these courses save in wholly exceptional circumstances. Because of the variation of practice among local authorities the result is unfair.

A student who is refused a grant and whose parents are unable to support him or who, reasonably enough, for he is likely to be aged 22 or more—is unwilling to depend on his parents, is debarred from entering the legal profession. But the vote is significant. The Ombudsman Committee on Legal Education which reported in 1971 thought it extremely important for the future of the profession that grants should be available because it vitally affects the character of the entry. The recent report of the Royal Commission on Legal Services expresses agreement and recommends that grants for the vocational stage should be mandatory. We understand that the Council of Local Education Authorities is of the same opinion.

A new Education Bill is now before Parliament which is to urge that the opportunity should be taken to remedy this injustice and ensure a strong and able legal profession for the future by implementing the recommendations of the royal commission. Yours faithfully,
W. P. OLIVER,
Chairman of the Committee of Heads of Polytechnic Law Schools,
J. C. SMITH,
Chairman of the Committee of Heads of University Law Schools,
University of Nottingham,
Nottingham.

Too much hot air

From Mr Gerald Williams

Sir, In some offices in mid-winter one can see staff at their desks in shirtsleeves.

Yours faithfully,
GERALD WILLIAMS,
Crockham House,
Wetherham,
Kent.

Error of judgment not negligence

From the President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Sir, The successful appeal in Whitehouse v Jordan (Law Report, December 6) will bring relief to all practising obstetricians in this country amongst whom there has been widespread anxiety about the implications of the original judgment.

The distinction between negligence and error of judgment in the exercise of due skill, so clearly made by Lord Denning, is fundamental not only in this case but in the whole field of medical practice. Indeed it applies to the legal profession itself, as the Master of the Rolls observed, the success of an appeal does not discredit the judge in the lower court.

The outcome of the case in dispute could have happened—indeed for many of us with long experience will have happened—for any obstetrician in the process of discovering in a particular case, or from the cumulative experience of many cases, the better way to manage difficult obstetric problems. The road towards safer childbirth has many milestones of tested and untested professional judgment.

If it were now widely accepted that errors of judgment are distinct from negligence, that would encourage the growth of critical professional audit of medical work on an educational rather than a punitive basis. It would also avert the kind of defensive medicine which has started to grow in this country, in which all are losers, and progress made of all.

Medical care is always impoverished when trust fails and people become polarised, and yet that is often inevitable in circumstances of loss, grief or handicap. To say that a doctor is not liable for compensation is not to say that he does not care, and all must endorse the view that society at large should bear the burden of unacceptable personal suffering.

The strong case for no-fault compensation is surely reinforced by the economics of a case whose original

costs of prosecution and defence totalled £90,000, chiefly borne by public funds.

Yours faithfully,
E. A. J. ALMENT,
President,
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists,
27 Sussex Place,
Regent's Park, NW1.

From Dr David Barnes

Sir, The professional negligence case should now go to the House of Lords.

It seems that errors of judgment, that is mistakes in a claimed sphere of competence are not now negligence. I had always thought that negligence was precisely judgment which had erred. Now I do not know what negligence is. It seems it will revolve around the degree of incompetence—a very subjective matter.

As a patient as well as a doctor I would prefer all persons who set up to assist me to be fully responsible for their actions and any damage which ensues as a result of that action.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID BARNES,
8 Park Lane,
Broxbourne,
Hertfordshire.

Nursery education

From the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council

Sir, The letter from Lady Alexandra Trevor-Roper and others (December 3) betrays a muddled understanding of what is happening in Oxfordshire with regard to spending cuts in general and nursery education in particular.

Yours correspondents accept that we should seek more economic use of premises and that we should encourage the participation of parents; and they advocate payment towards the cost, in accordance with means. All of those things are now under active investigation as a result of the county council's decision to phase out the council's inheritance of nursery education from 1981-82 onwards. So why should the council's decision be challenged?

At present nursery education in Oxfordshire is confined to a small percentage of the under-fives who happen to live in those areas where there are nursery schools or classes. I hope that we can meet the educational and social needs of the under-fives with a new approach which will give a good start in life to many more children at much less cost.

All this is not revealed in your correspondents' letter. Still less do they add that Oxfordshire is planning cuts which fall some way short

of the Secretary of State's target both for 1979-80 and 1980-81, despite a worsening economic situation.

Yours faithfully,
H. A. FARRANT,
Leader,
Oxfordshire County Council,
County Hall, Oxford.

From Mr T. S. Lodge

Sir, Informed persons concerned with juvenile delinquency and adult crime will, it is to be hoped, support the argument by Lady Alexandra Trevor-Roper and others for the continuance of nursery education and, indeed, press for its extension to every child.

By the age of five a child with inadequate parents may already have acquired delinquent tendencies. There is little hope of influencing parents to bring up their children differently, and delinquent tendencies, once contracted, are in the vast majority of cases impossible to remove.

The incarceration in nursery schools of decent standards of behaviour and consideration for others is probably the only way open to our society of preventing a continual increase in crime.

Yours faithfully,
T. S. LODGE,
Chaddesley,
Slimes Oak Road,
Woldingham, Surrey.

many years. Any solution will involve money. Whether or not money which the proposed scheme requires should be found at this particular time is for Government to decide—but there is something to be said for not forgetting pre-education promises.

Yours faithfully,
DESMOND LEE,
8 Barton Close,
Cambridge.

From Dr M. A. Hooker

Sir, In her article on Friday (November 30) Diana Geddes points out that many of the Government's supporters have reservations about the assisted places scheme.

Fees for overseas students

From the Director of The Polytechnic of North London

Sir, The position concerning fees for overseas students seems to me to be less straightforward than it may appear to some of your distinguished correspondents, and certain distinctions need to be made.

First, I am prepared to join in objecting wholeheartedly to the policy insofar as it affects post-graduate students from overseas. I suspect that it is this substantial component of their overseas student population that, for example, Cambridge, Oxford, LSE, UMIST, Imperial College and other similar university institutions are concerned to defend. The individuals in this group are or should be, an "élite" of their country, that either wishes to absorb the beneficial atmosphere of our great centres of learning, or to undertake specialized courses of study, or both.

However, for those of us who operate in a much humbler circumstances the overseas population is principally composed of students following first-degree or diploma courses and is of an exceedingly varied provenance and competence. I am not at all sure that this group necessarily merits the degree of support that seems appropriate for the postgraduates.

My second point concerns the effect on "second-class" countries and their students. There has been a great deal of comment on the effect of a serious drop in overseas student numbers on our home universities—and polytechnics, incidentally—but little about the effects on overseas students of taking first-degree or undergraduate courses in a cultural environment nearly always very different from that of their home country. Nor is much said about the ultimate value of such courses—their products—to the home country. The benefits are by no means always obvious, it seems to me.

My purpose therefore is not so much to express any great sense of outrage, but rather to hope that ministers may be persuaded to sit down with representatives of overseas students, polytechnics and other colleges, in order to reach a more rational outcome than the Department of Education and Science's policy seems at present likely to achieve.

Yours sincerely,
J. G. MILLER,
Director,
The Polytechnic of North London,
Holloway, N7,
December 6.

From Mr Joseph Bradshaw

Sir, If 34 professors at the London School of Economics (November 30) can't devise some means of averting "irreparable damage" to many universities, if the government's policy is implemented, what hope is there for the rest of us, unless it be that we shall not have so many professors of economics doing irreparable damage to the nation?

Yours faithfully,
JOSEPH BRADSHAW,
Coppell Beches,
Blackdown,
Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire.

Ulster violence

From Dr T. D. M. Martin

Sir, Patrick Bragan informs us, in his article of December 3, that an American sociologist, Miss Martha Crenshaw, has prepared a report on Irish terrorism for the State Department which concludes that violence would continue in Northern Ireland even if all the legitimate grievances of the Catholics were met and a new power-sharing executive established. He adds that this pessimistic view is not shared by the Department.

It is difficult to see why Miss Crenshaw and the State Department should be at odds over this question since, following the Pope's visit to Ireland, Mr Ruairi O Bradaigh, President of Provisional Sinn Féin, made a statement which included the following: "The minimum requirement for justice is that the British should declare their intention of getting out. The only key to a permanent peace is that the British should leave. If justice simply means equality for the Catholics with the Protestants under British rule then we are not interested" (The Guardian, October 3).

Could anything be clearer? I am, Sir, your obedient servant.
T. D. M. MARTIN,
Hayfield,
Banchourne,
Berkshire.

Wheel and woe

From Mr J. T. Frewen

Sir, I would prefer to suffer from a minor inconvenience caused by my fellow commuter's bicycle on a station platform than breathe the exhaust fumes from the car that he may bring into the city instead.

British Rail should think again; its ban on commuters' bicycles (report, December 7) is ecologically insane.

Yours sincerely,
JOY FREWEN,
35 Arlington Park Mansions,
Sutton Lane,
Chiswick, W1.

Heavenly music

From Canon Paul Oestreicher

Sir, From other reviews I should have guessed that in *Amedeus* Peter Shaffer is wrestling with the divine mystery of Mozart. With gratitude for Bernard Levin's insight may I remind your readers that one of this century's greatest theologians, Karl Barth, also wrestled with this problem and in a memorable lecture concluded that although when the angels sing for God they sing Bach, when they sing for pleasure they sing Mozart and God eavesdrops.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL OESTREICHER,
40 Dartmouth Row, SE10.

OVERSEAS

Vietnamese morale wavers as the Kampucheans end political agreements to fight together

Neil Kelly
Bangkok, Thailand, Dec. 9
The morale of the 100,000 soldiers in the Kampuchean army is waning, according to a Thai military commander, as the army and anti-communist forces confirmed that they are putting aside their conflicts to fight against the Vietnamese.

Colonel Prachak Sawangchit, commander of the second brigade which mans the critical section of the border, said the low morale of the Kampuchean troops and of the logistics hampered operations against the Vietnamese. He said the second brigade was the only one that had not been infiltrated by the Vietnamese. He said the morale of the Kampuchean troops was low because they were fighting against the Vietnamese, not against the Khmer Rouge. He said the morale of the Kampuchean troops was low because they were fighting against the Vietnamese, not against the Khmer Rouge.

Thailand in hot pursuit of retreating Kampucheans.
Colonel Prachak described the Vietnamese tactics as simultaneous sweeps, north to south and south to north, against the Kampuchean forces. He said the Vietnamese were forcing the Kampucheans into smaller groups in the next two months but would not stop them fighting on.

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Rain ruins Golden Triangle's opium crop

From Richard Hughes
Bangkok, Dec. 9
Torrential rain in the poppy-growing "Golden Triangle" region, which straddles Thailand, Burma and Laos, has destroyed this year's expected bumper crop of opium and heroin.

Mr. Peter Le, Hong Kong's Commissioner for Narcotics, said he was happy after a visit to Bangkok, that the forecast average crop of between 450 and 500 tons of opium will shrink again this year to an estimated 150 tons.

The drop in production means that the Pakistan and Afghanistan, which now grow sufficient opium to produce more than 55,000 tons of heroin annually, will continue to monopolize the illicit supply of drugs channelled through Iran and Turkey to Western Europe and Britain.

Officials of the Anti-Narcotics Bureau in Hong Kong also predict that the Pakistan-Afghanistan region will supply the United States with most of its heroin next year, after a cutback in supplies smuggled in from Mexico.

Nicholas Hirst and Pearce Wright look towards the Government's imminent nuclear power statement

Going for the nuclear option

Believe Parliament rises for the Christmas recess. Mr. David Howell, the Secretary of State for Energy, will make his long-awaited statement on nuclear power. It should be as carefully constructed a piece of propaganda as this Government has ever issued. The one hand to satisfy the nuclear industry that it has a real future, and yet to seem sufficiently cautious to give as little ammunition as possible to the anti-nuclear lobby. This will not be an easy task.

It is a good and a bad time to announce a commitment to the expansion of nuclear power. Events in Iran, fears of increasing shortages of oil supplies next year, unrest in the Middle East, even the fact that the miners went as far as a ballot before accepting their 20 per cent pay offer, all highlight the uncertainty of world energy supplies and the need for alternative sources. The nuclear industry has been going through a bad patch. The accident at Harrisburg which has led to a six-month delay on new orders for reactors, the discovery of radioactive leaks at the Windscale reprocessing plant, and last week at Capenhurst near Chester, and union action in France over cracks in the pipes in nuclear stations, have created a bad image.

As the Cabinet committee minutes leaked to the magazine Time Out so nicely showed, the Government understands it must tread very gently indeed if it is to convince the public of a need for nuclear expansion without creating a backlash.

Even if it wanted to, the Government cannot do nothing for long. Some time next year, according to its well-publicized plans, the Central Electricity Generating Board will ask for permission to build a demonstration pressurized water reactor similar to the type damaged at Harrisburg. All political initiatives would be lost if the Government were to refuse the request. The need for nuclear support given to nuclear power both by the Prime Minister and Energy Department ministers, since the Conservatives took office, has been such, that to carry any weight, it must be made more than made so.

Dimitri to curb terrorism

an Piskel
Istanbul, Dec. 9
After taking office, Mr. Dimitri's minority Government is to curb the rampant terrorism in the country by the national army.

Mr. Dimitri's 14-member Government, which was sworn in on December 9, is to curb the rampant terrorism in the country by the national army.

'Political retaliation' opposed in S Korea

From Peter Hazelhurst
Seoul, Dec. 9
Mr. Kim Dae-jung, the South Korean opposition leader, has declared that he will oppose any form of political retaliation against former members of the late President Park Chung-hee's regime.

Mr. Kim, who was released from house arrest yesterday, also called on his supporters to remain calm and peaceful while the country weathers the uncertainties of wide-reaching political changes.

He gave a warning to the more impetuous supporters of the opposition who might take their political causes to the streets. "At no other time is unity and a move towards national reconciliation required as it is now. In turn the Government should take steps to redress the wrongs committed in the past years."

Mr. Kim said he welcomed the Government's decision to rescind President Park's repressive emergency decrees and release political prisoners. But some political prisoners are still inside, they should all be released, he added.

There is also close liaison between anti-narcotics authorities throughout South-East Asia and Japan, and three senior Hong Kong officials recently visiting Australia to study new legislation and surveillance measures being adopted there.

The unique United Nations campaign, supported personally and financially by King Bhumibol of Thailand, to offer grants to governments to combat drug production, is still sluggish.

The world drug problem remains non-racial and non-political. Russia is stepping up its hidden authority in Afghanistan to try to stifle opium production, a Western diplomat in Hong Kong pointed out.

Moscow has successfully crushed local drug smuggling and is now far more worried about vodka and whisky than opium and heroin.

Liberty in exchange for pledge renouncing subversion

From David Watts
Jakarta, Dec. 9
Indonesia continued its attempts to improve its human rights image with the release of a further batch of political prisoners yesterday.

Yesterday 699 people were released from the detention camps, and the Government said that others were being freed in other centres.

Indonesia frees more prisoners

The ceremony was as drab and military as the policy which kept thousands of people in jail without trial since 1965.

It was only after the ceremony, held in an old British-built gymnasium hung with banners proclaiming the state philosophy and later advertisements, that the heart-rending human dimension of the military government's detention policy began to break to the surface.

One father saw his daughter, who was born after his arrest.

The prisoners, in crisply pressed trousers and open shirts, sat in rows, the set of their faces reflecting the communist ideology in blue folders on their knees, their faces expressionless.

Those freed in Jogjakarta formed part of a total of 2,045 "B" category prisoners released by the Government.

The majority of the political prisoners have been held since September 30, 1965, when the Government, claiming the two-million strong Communist Party attempted a coup. Others consider it more accurate to say that one clique of generals assisted by the Communist Party attempted a coup.

Whatever the truth, in the ensuing purge 750,000 people were arrested and between 500,000 and a million people killed.

Those freed in Jogjakarta formed part of a total of 2,045 "B" category prisoners released by the Government.

at refugees force police to open fire

Representatives of the Communist Party establishment in Hong Kong have expressed approval privately of the shooting by the local police.

The reinforced Chinese troops along the mainland side of the border are already shooting to kill.

The number of Chinese arrested this month has already reached almost 1,600, bringing the total of those forcibly returned to China this year to 78,255.

Brigadier Ian Christie, formerly of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, has now taken command of the Gurkha garrison along the mainland border.

Brigadier Christie, aged 44, was awarded the Military Cross for bravery during the Malayan emergency, and he also served in anti-guerrilla operations in West Africa, Northern Ireland and Oman.

Smugglers jailed: The two main Communist newspapers, here have reported prominently the trial and imprisonment in China of two Hong Kong Chinese convicted of smuggling.

Mr. Ohira back in Tokyo after pledges to China
Tokyo, Dec. 9.—Mr. Masayoshi Ohira, the Japanese Prime Minister, returned to Tokyo today from his five-day trip to China.

During his stay in Peking, Mr. Ohira had two rounds of talks with Chairman Hua Guofeng.

Weighing the necessity against the dangers

Mrs. Thatcher's commitment to a large scale atomic energy programme has provoked the launching of a new anti-nuclear campaign. It embraces a formidable range of people from public interest groups, industry, the academic world and all shades of the political spectrum. Many of them represent organizations that are well recognized for their opposition, but they have been joined by newcomers from local amenity and national political movements. All of them have reacted strongly to reports of the Government's long term plans for about 20 new nuclear power stations, or twice the number already in operation or under construction.

More particularly, there is strong opposition to the adoption of radioactive waste from the pressurized water type reactor in new stations. For it was a PWR reactor involved in the accident at Three Mile Island. That incident has cast a long shadow over the nuclear industry.

An indefinite freeze, challenged by the United States Congress, has been placed by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the licensing of any new reactor. At least seven reactors worth £2,500 million due to be brought into operation by June will remain idle. The cost of substitution for this source of energy, according to the Atomic Industrial Forum, is the equivalent in coal and oil of 200,000 barrels of oil a day.

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